

MILLHOUSE INTEGRATIVE MEDICAL CENTRE

3.1 PATIENT COMPLAINTS PROCEDURE

Summary:

The Millhouse Medical Centre will acknowledged promptly any complaint received, investigate impartially the grievance and inform the complainant of the findings and action taken. Where appropriate the complainant will be informed of the Health and Disability Commissioner and the complaints procedure will be displayed publicly.

Terms & Process:

Complaints Officer

Practice Manager

Complaint

- A consumer complaint is any expression of dissatisfaction received from a patient, visitor, family member, or a member of the community regarding an event that has occurred, a system or process within Practice name or a staff member
- Complaints may be either: Written - letter, email or fax, Verbal - telephone or face-to-face

Accountability

- It is the responsibility of staff to ensure consumers are aware of how to make a written complaint.
- It is the responsibility of staff to ensure consumers are aware of these services.

Verbal complaints

- Verbal complaints are to be documented, either by the complainant or by the person receiving the complaint, and to be managed in the same manner as a written complaint.
- An effort must be made to resolve the complaint immediately where possible. Often the staff member on the spot can handle verbal complaints.

Written complaints

- Written complaints or those written on consumer feedback forms are to be attached to the '**Complaints Investigation Form**' for action. This is to be done by the end of the day on which the complaint is made.
- A consumer may instead, or in addition, involve the Health Advocates Trust, and/or lay a complaint with the Health and Disability Commissioner and/or the Privacy Commissioner

Millhouse Medical Complaint Management Guidelines:

The following process will be followed in the investigation of a complaint received against a Doctor or any Employee of the Millhouse Medical Centre (MMC).

1. Reception of a complaint.

- a. All written complaints are to be forwarded to the Practice Manager.
- b. The practice manager will acknowledge each complaint in writing within 5 working days.
- c. Each complaint will be recorded in a '**Complaints Register**'.
- a. Each complaint will be dealt with fairly.
- d. The Millhouse Medical Centre Principal Doctor will be informed of every complaint.
- e. The complainant where appropriate will be informed of the Health and Disability Commissioner.

2. Verbal complaint.

The person will be asked to:

- a. Discuss the issue directly with the Doctor or Senior Staff Member OR
- b. Place in writing the complaint which may be on the '**complaints procedures form**' (attached).

3. Complaint investigation.

- a. The Practice Manager will investigate the complaint thoroughly in a **caring concerned manner**.
- b. The Practice Manager will advise staff named or associated with the complaint prior to the investigation process commencing.

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- c. The Practice Manager where appropriate may discuss the incident immediately with the person(s) involved in the complaint or ask them to **respond in writing** on the events that occurred.
- d. The Practice Manager will **discuss the findings** and recommendations with the Practice Principal.
- e. The Practice Manager in consultation with the Practice Principal will **inform the complainant** of the Medical Centre's action within 10 working days of the complaint's reception. If the investigation interval exceeds two weeks the complainant will be notified that additional time is required and kept apprised every 10 days on the investigation progress.
- f. The complainant will be updated on the progress of their complaint at intervals of not more than one month.
- g. Staff involved in the incident may be asked to assist in the complaints resolution.

4. Investigation Records & Privacy

- a. The complaint and information relating to the complaint will **be kept confidential in a secure place.**
- b. Each complaint will be recorded in a confidential '**Complaints Register**'
- c. The Complaints Register will consist of a duplicate file listed alphabetically under the complainant's name and the Millhouse Medical Centre personnel.
- d. **If the complaint is received from someone other than the patient** and is relation to their care, signed consent from the patient or their guardian must be obtained, before information on the investigation is released.
- e. **If the complaint comes from a third party** and the patient has died, the trustees and executors of the estate are to be asked for consent before the complaint is investigated. Evidence of the authenticity of the trustees or executors consent is a copy of the Grant of Probate of the will of the deceased patient.

5. Indemnity Insurance.

- a. The Practice Manger will ensure that **accident employee's insurance** and **nurse's indemnity cover** exists and that each Doctor at the Millhouse Medical Centre has **current medical defence insurance and medical registration.**

- 6. **The Complaints Procedure** will be displayed on the Millhouse Medical Centre waiting room notice board and website.

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The following is the 'Code of Health Disability Services Consumer Rights'

RIGHT 9 Rights in Respect of Teaching or Research

The rights in this Code extend to those occasions when a consumer is participating in, or it is proposed that a consumer participate in, teaching or research.

RIGHT 10 Right to Complain

- 1) Every consumer has the right to complain about a provider in any form appropriate to the consumer.
- 2) Every consumer may make a complaint to -
 - a) The individual or individuals who provided the services complained of; and
 - b) Any person authorised to receive complaints about that provider; and
 - c) Any other appropriate person, including -
 - i. An independent advocate provided under the Health and Disability Commissioner Act 1994; and
 - ii. The Health and Disability Commissioner.
- 3) Every provider must facilitate the fair, simple, speedy, and efficient resolution of complaints.
- 4) Every provider must inform a consumer about progress on the consumer's complaint at intervals of not more than 1 month.
- 5) Every provider must comply with all the other relevant rights in this Code when dealing with complaints.
- 6) Every provider, unless an employee of a provider, must have a complaints procedure that ensures that -
 - a) The complaint is acknowledged in writing within 5 working days of receipt, unless it has been resolved to the satisfaction of the consumer within that period; and
 - b) The consumer is informed of any relevant internal and external complaints procedures, including the availability of -
 - i. Independent advocates provided under the Health and Disability Commissioner Act 1994; and
 - ii. The Health and Disability Commissioner; and
 - c) The consumer's complaint and the actions of the provider regarding that complaint are documented; and
 - d) The consumer receives all information held by the provider that is or may be relevant to the complaint.
- 7) Within 10 working days of giving written acknowledgement of a complaint, the provider must, -
 - a) Decide whether the provider -
 - i. Accepts that the complaint is justified; or
 - ii. Does not accept that the complaint is justified; or
 - b) If it decides that more time is needed to investigate the complaint, -
 - i. Determine how much additional time is needed; and
 - ii. If that additional time is more than 20 working days, inform the consumer of that determination and of the reasons for it.
- 8) As soon as practicable after a provider decides whether or not it accepts that a complaint is justified, the provider must inform the consumer of -
 - a) The reasons for the decision; and
 - b) Any actions the provider proposes to take; and
 - c) Any appeal procedure the provider has in place.

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The Millhouse Medical Centre endeavours to provide quality medical care. However we realise that there may be times when you are dissatisfied with the service received. If this occurs and you feel your grievance should be heard you may address your complaint in writing to the:

**Practice Manager
Millhouse Medical Centre
128 Millhouse Drive
Howick**

PRIVATE AND CONFIDENTIAL

In your letter to the Practice Manager please include the following details:

- Time and date of incident(s).
- Medical Centre personnel involved.
- Brief description of the incident(s) that occurred.

Your letter of complaint will be received in confidence and investigated. Your letter will be acknowledged in writing and you will be informed on the action taken following the investigation. For your convenience you may wish to use the reverse side of this form.

If you feel that your complaint constitutes serious medical misconduct you may contact the:

**Health and Disability Commissioner
P O Box 1799
Auckland**

Thank you

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COMPLAINTS INVESTIGATION FORM

Date complaint received

Received by whom

Date complaint acknowledged

Staff involved

Complaint.....
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Investigation Process.....
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Summary findings.....
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Conclusion/Resolution/Follow-up.....
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